UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/75
31 January 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM III)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1008 (1995) of 7 August 1995, in which the Council, inter alia, decided to extend the mandate of the Mission until 8 February 1996. It reviews major events from 8 August 1995 and covers developments since my report of 7 December 1995 (S/1995/1012).

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. Since my last report, progress in the peace process in Angola has been very slow. It had been expected that the meetings between President José Eduardo dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi, President of the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), which took place in Franceville, Gabon on 10 August and in Brussels on 25 September 1995, together with the resumption of military talks between the two parties and the commencement of the quartering of UNITA troops on 20 November 1995, would foster a climate of mutual trust and confidence between the Government and UNITA. However, a serious setback occurred towards the end of 1995, when the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) took control of several locations in the oil-producing region of Soyo, in the province of Zaire. Citing this offensive, UNITA suspended the quartering of its troops, withdrew its assistance to UNAVEM III in the construction of quartering areas and, in some areas under its control, imposed restrictions on the movement of UNAVEM III and other international personnel, including those of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

3. Following persistent efforts by my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, a government delegation met with UNITA leaders in their Bailundo headquarters on 21 December 1995 to review the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol (see S/1994/441, annex). The two parties undertook once again to start fulfilling their respective obligations as soon as possible. These include the definitive cessation of all military activities, the conclusion of military talks, the release of prisoners, an end to hostile propaganda, the resumption of the quartering of UNITA troops, the quartering of the rapid reaction police and the withdrawal of FAA to the nearest barracks.

4. However, UNITA failed to take the steps necessary to move the peace process forward, citing complaints of military threats to its forces in several parts of the country. The members of the Joint Commission, which is the main body responsible for the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, deplored the Government's violations of the cease-fire and UNITA's refusal to resume implementation of the peace process, in particular the quartering of its troops.

5. In early January 1996, I telephoned Mr. Savimbi, expressed my strong concern at the sluggish pace of progress and urged him to help put the peace process back on track. My Special Representative and the representatives of the three observer States (Portugal, Russian Federation and United States of America) also made several individual and collective démarches to the parties, including to the two leaders. The visit to Angola by President Mário Soares of Portugal, who graciously agreed to convey a message from me to the two parties, was an important contribution to these collective efforts. They resulted, on 12 January 1996, in the acceptance by the two parties of a new timetable for the implementation of the understandings reached by their representatives on 21 December 1995.

6. The letters addressed to both Angolan leaders by the President of the Security Council on 15 January (S/1996/31 and 32), which were delivered to them by the Permanent Representative of the United States during her recent visit to the country, further underscored the growing impatience of the international community and the need to make progress towards the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol.

7. The quartering of UNITA troops has yet to resume in earnest. The Government has, however, taken some significant steps, including withdrawing its forces from Pedra do Alemao, a forward position near the quartering area of Vila Nova, and starting the quartering of its rapid reaction police. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has confirmed that the Government has released 350 registered prisoners. All prisoners identified by the Government have thus been freed. UNITA, which has so far freed only 44 prisoners, has yet to make a similar effort. The Government also announced that it was terminating its contract with the firm "Executive Outcomes" which has provided it with military and security support. A large group of the personnel concerned departed the country from the military base in Cabo Ledo, Bengo province, on 11 January, but UNITA claims that others remain in the country. I urge the two parties, once again, to find the earliest possible solution to this sensitive issue.

8. Pursuant to article 12 of the status-of-forces agreement of 3 May 1995 between the United Nations and the Government, and in accordance with the decisions of the Security Council, UNAVEM III has made all arrangements necessary for the establishment in Angola of an independent United Nations radio station. The Government has still not granted UNAVEM III the requisite facilities in this regard, although it has provided additional time on the Angolan national radio and television for UNAVEM information programmes.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

A. Observance of the cease-fire

9. Although the military situation has been relatively quiet in recent weeks, the cease-fire had been seriously undermined in early December 1995 by an offensive by government troops around Soyo. As a result, tensions between FAA and UNITA troops again rose in various parts of the country, attesting to the fragility of the peace process. However, under intense political pressure, FAA withdrew from the positions concerned late in December. As a confidence-building measure, a platoon of United Nations troops was deployed to a strategically important location in this area, despite the fact that UNAVEM III is neither equipped nor mandated to serve as an interpositioned disengagement force.

10. Between 1 December 1995 and 25 January 1996, a total of 154 cease-fire violations (58 of them attributed to FAA, 91 to UNITA and 5 of unknown origin) were reported. Frequent breaches of the cease-fire occurred as a result of small-scale troop advances, attacks on and looting of villages, forced conscriptions (particularly by UNITA) and ambushes. Many of them consisted of acts of banditry. On 18 December, a UNITA-chartered aircraft belonging to a company based in Zaire crashed in the southern part of Angola; the Government strongly protested this unauthorized flight and asked the United Nations to participate in a comprehensive investigation (see S/1995/1066).

11. The period immediately following the government offensive was marked by an escalation of hostility by UNITA towards UNAVEM III, which was painfully reminiscent of similar behaviour in the past. Until recently, UNITA had withdrawn all its liaison officers from United Nations team sites and its workforce from the quartering areas. It had also placed restrictions on UNAVEM III activities in many areas under its control. On two occasions, UNITA prevented United Nations teams from leaving their camp; it also threatened to shoot down UNAVEM III aircraft that flew without its prior clearance and resorted to a public campaign against UNAVEM III.

12. During the second half of January 1996, however, the Government and UNITA agreed to the establishment of a "conflict prevention group" which includes high-ranking military representatives of the two parties. The group operates out of UNAVEM III headquarters in Luanda and is expected to maintain direct communications with the respective military authorities and field commanders to prevent or rapidly de-escalate cease-fire violations.

B. Completion of the formation of the Angolan Armed Forces

13. After an absence of almost two months, the UNITA military delegation returned to Luanda on 11 January 1996 to resume bilateral negotiations on the completion of the formation of the joint armed forces. By mid-January, military delegations of the two parties reached an important agreement under which UNITA will provide 26,000 soldiers to the national army, 200 personnel to the air force and 100 to the navy, in addition to the more than 2,500 already integrated into FAA in 1992. However, crucial details regarding the structure of the joint

armed forces, the allocation of posts and, in particular, the creation of a fourth branch of FAA to perform tasks associated with national reconstruction still need to be finalized. Negotiations on these issues are proceeding with difficulty but UNAVEM III is assisting the parties to find a workable, fair and durable solution.

C. Quartering process

14. It is disturbing that, more than one year after the signing of the Lusaka Protocol, the quartering of UNITA troops - one of the central elements of the peace process - has not made any significant progress. Shortly after the cantonment of UNITA troops began in November 1995, it ground to a halt and was later declared officially suspended. Since then, the search for excuses to delay this process has continued. Nevertheless, UNAVEM III, including its infantry units (which are not intended to perform such tasks), have proceeded with the construction of quartering areas. Four such areas, with a capacity to accommodate up to 20,000 soldiers, have been ready for some time; work at 10 others is either under way or close to completion.

15. On 19 January 1996, Mr. Savimbi pledged that 16,500 troops out of the declared 62,500 UNITA military personnel would report to the quartering areas by 8 February. However, as of 25 January, only the Vila Nova camp was operational, with a total of 693 UNITA troops registered there and approximately 600 of their dependants settled nearby. There are reports, however, that some of the assembled soldiers are under age, that they came without uniform and that they were carrying old weapons. After protracted discussions, UNITA has accepted that it has primary responsibility for erecting temporary shelters for family members of its troops, using plastic sheeting supplied by the donor community. As soldiers' dependants relocate to these temporary sites, they will be registered and receive appropriate humanitarian assistance.

16. In the meantime, the required United Nations and NGO personnel have for some time been deployed to those quartering areas which have been completed. The long delays in beginning the assembly process have placed additional strains on the limited resources available to United Nations agencies and NGOs, not to mention the deterioration of costly United Nations equipment already supplied to these camps.

D. Demining and road rehabilitation

17. Demining, mine verification and reconstruction of access roads and bridges remain daunting tasks, which affect many aspects of the peace process in Angola. UNAVEM III engineer and bridging units, together with four international NGOs, have continued relevant operations throughout the country. After protracted delays, the South African mine verification company, MECHEM, was allowed by the Government to begin working on northern and southern routes. However, its operations were recently suspended following an ambush of one of its convoys. These continuing delays in the start of MECHEM activities will have budgetary implications. Unfortunately, the efforts of the Angolan parties in this area continued to be minimal; the only significant joint FAA/UNITA demining

operation, in Cuito Cuanavale, was halted as a result of the government offensive in November 1995.

18. In the meantime, the Secretariat has reviewed the mine action plan for Angola and approved an accelerated implementation plan as of 1 January 1996; the plan is aimed at developing a sustainable national mine-clearance capacity and provides for funds that were not used in 1995 to be carried over to the next budget. The Central Mine Action Training School organized by UNAVEM III was opened in Luanda in December 1995; it will operate under the command of the UNAVEM III Force Commander until 1997, when it will be taken over by the Angolan National Institute for the Removal of Explosive Devices, which has been set up with the assistance of the United Nations and has already trained 183 specialists. The training school has commenced its first course for 25 Angolan instructors, which will be followed by a demining course in Kuito for 66 students. Mine awareness training, in which the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and several NGOs are involved, continued in several parts of the country.

E. UNAVEM III strength and deployment

19. As of 25 January 1996, the strength of UNAVEM III military personnel was 6,384, including 342 military observers. The number of team sites where United Nations military and police observers are deployed remains at 54, to be increased by 5 when logistically feasible. Notwithstanding the formidable difficulties presented by mined roads and logistical constraints, United Nations troops are present in all quartering areas and storage sites for weapons collected from UNITA.

20. A Zambian unit of 300 personnel was deployed to the south-eastern region in December 1995. It was followed by the deployment of a 200-strong Namibian mine verification company to the central region in January 1996. The induction of the Ukrainian bridging company, which is essential for the opening of the strategically important Malange-Saurimo road, is expected in early March 1996. After the most recent withdrawal by a Member State of its offer to provide a 300-strong infantry unit, the Secretariat has initiated urgent consultations to find a replacement. In the meantime, several contingents that deployed to Angola in the middle of 1995 have begun scheduled rotations.

IV. POLICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS

21. The UNAVEM III civilian police observer component (CIVPOL), composed of 225 officers deployed to 33 team sites, has stepped up its monitoring of the neutrality of the Angolan National Police, security arrangements for UNITA leaders in Luanda, quartering of the rapid reaction police, free circulation of people and goods and the general law and order situation in the country. In addition, CIVPOL observers continued to assist the Human Rights Unit of UNAVEM III. Between 1 January 1995 and 25 January 1996, a total of 330 cases related to human rights, the neutrality of the Angolan National Police and accidents involving United Nations personnel and property were investigated.

22. As a result of recent understandings, the Government started the quartering of the rapid reaction police on 10 January 1996, when 1,056 personnel were quartered in Luanda, followed by 237 in Uige on 17 January and 469 in Huambo on 24 January. Lists of personnel quartered in these cities and their armaments were handed over to UNAVEM III, but consultations between the United Nations and the Government concerning the overall strength of this police branch and its equipment are still continuing. Massive quartering of the rapid reaction police presents a particular challenge to the Government and I appeal to the donor community to provide additional resources to support this vital undertaking.

23. There is an urgent need for the two parties to agree on a comprehensive security plan for UNITA leaders. UNITA recently submitted to the United Nations a list of 20 of its officials who require special protection in the national capital; as a special measure, security arrangements were also extended to the head and deputy head of the UNITA delegation to the Joint Commission. In the meantime, the Angolan National Police indicated its readiness to train 212 UNITA personnel to serve officially as bodyguards for the UNITA leadership. It is imperative, therefore, for UNITA to provide the required number of personnel without further delay.

24. The disarmament of the civilian population throughout the country, which is another essential element of the Lusaka Protocol, has also not commenced. UNAVEM III has prepared recommendations on the modalities of this process, but the Government believes that it should begin only after the completion of the quartering of UNITA troops. However, the increasing number of acts of banditry and the deterioration of law and order throughout Angola calls for the expeditious start of the disarmament campaign.

25. The human rights situation in Angola also remains a source of concern. Reports from UNAVEM III CIVPOL teams and United Nations human rights experts, who are now deployed to all six regions, indicate that assassinations, abductions, looting, extortion, restrictions on the freedom of movement and other criminal acts continue unabated in many parts of the country. These abuses are perpetrated by both UNITA and government forces, as well as by other unidentified armed elements, who usually target the most vulnerable sectors of the civilian population.

26. A national seminar on human rights, organized by the Angolan Government with the support of UNAVEM III, was held in Luanda on 17 and 18 January 1996. The seminar reviewed the situation in this domain and formulated a strategy for promoting fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. One of its main conclusions was that respect for human rights is both a prerequisite and a guarantee for lasting peace in Angola. It was also widely recognized that the country needs special assistance, including funding, for human rights education and for the strengthening of the judicial system.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

27. Since the beginning of December 1995, security for humanitarian assistance activities has deteriorated in many parts of the country, especially those controlled by UNITA. In some provinces several relief flights could not take

place because of restrictions imposed by UNITA; road convoys had to be cancelled in some areas, since security guarantees could not be obtained by UNAVEM III. There were also incidents of confiscation of relief goods, vehicles and radios, as well as harassment of humanitarian personnel and, in a few cases, their temporary detention. As a result, one international NGO suspended its activities in UNITA-held areas. Several NGOs that had previously expressed willingness to expand their humanitarian activities to UNITA areas are increasingly reluctant to do so. Aware of this trend, UNITA issued a public statement on 1 January 1996, promising to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations and to respect the integrity of their staff and safeguard their property. I hope that this promise will be honoured.

28. Humanitarian assistance activities were none the less carried out wherever possible. These included deliveries of food, seeds and medical supplies, as well as nutritional assessments and the repair of medical equipment. Efforts to promote reconciliation between the Government and UNITA were supported by arranging for their joint participation in humanitarian projects. Special training was particularly aimed at UNITA health personnel assigned to work at several quartering areas in the central part of the country. Joint missions by representatives of UNAVEM III, the United Nations Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UCAH), UNITA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) visited centres for disabled UNITA soldiers in order to prepare for the future demobilization of this vulnerable group.

29. Thirteen bailey bridges donated by the Government of the United States have arrived in Angola. These bridges will be erected by UNAVEM III military engineers to enhance the operations of the peace-keeping force and the free circulation of people and goods.

30. The difficulties encountered in the peace process during 1995 have led to a slower rhythm than expected in the implementation of the humanitarian assistance programme. With the quartering and demobilization of troops behind schedule, very few refugees and internally displaced people have been able to return and resume productive activities in their areas of origin or choice. As a consequence, there is a need for substantial humanitarian assistance during 1996 for the demobilization process, demining activities and the resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees.

VI. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

31. During the past six months, the Angolan economy deteriorated further, which resulted in a budget deficit of US$ 600 million. The financing of this deficit fuelled inflation, which reached 2,000 per cent for 1995. This situation is partly a result of the complex post-war problems facing the Government; but it also reflects the Government's difficulty in implementing effective stabilization measures and the necessary reforms.

32. In December 1995, a mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) visited Angola to assess the evolution of the staff monitoring programme, which was negotiated with the Government in August 1995. The mission concluded that the majority of the provisions in this programme had not been implemented. This

led to suspension of the programme. Apart from the lack of national capacity to implement and monitor many economic and financial policies, IMF was also concerned at the absence of a political consensus in favour of macroeconomic stabilization. As soon as adequate consensus emerges and improved implementation capacity is established, IMF will be ready to resume negotiations at once for a new programme. It is expected that, as an interim measure, the Government and IMF will concentrate on implementing only a few measures and institutional reforms aimed at stabilization. In the meantime, the Director of the World Bank Division for Southern Africa has visited Angola to continue the ongoing discussions on the economic reform programme and the prospect for World Bank assistance for the rehabilitation of Angola.

33. On 30 November 1995, a review meeting was held in Luanda, organized with the collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to assess and approve the evaluation report of the national financial systems project, which provides technical assistance in the areas of bank supervision and monetary operations, government budgeting and tax and customs administration. The donors, Sweden and France, as well as IMF, reiterated their readiness to provide support in this domain and to prepare a third phase of this project in May 1996. Furthermore, the Government requested UNDP, in cooperation with its development partners, to review the projects related to institutional capacity for economic management.

34. As a follow-up to the round-table conference held in Brussels on 25 and 26 September 1995, the Government, assisted by UNDP, invited the representatives of the donor community to a briefing on the latest developments in the round-table process, at which it presented its proposed structure for the national coordination and implementation programme. With regard to the launching of the community rehabilitation programme in early 1996, several donors have reaffirmed their intention to send appraisal missions to Angola in the near future. At the same time, it is obvious that, while international private business is interested in investing in Angola, it will require concrete evidence that the peace process has made major progress and that the necessary economic reforms are under way.

VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

35. By its resolution 50/209 of 23 December 1995, the General Assembly authorized me to enter into commitments at a monthly rate not to exceed US$ 28,229,100 gross for the maintenance of UNAVEM III from 9 February to 30 June 1996, subject to the extension of its mandate by the Security Council. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of UNAVEM III, as recommended in paragraph 41 below, I shall seek from the General Assembly at its resumed fiftieth session the additional resources required for the period beyond 30 June 1996.

36. As of 22 January 1996, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNAVEM special account for the period since the inception of the Mission to 31 December 1995 amounted to US$ 26.4 million. This amount does not reflect the most recent appropriation of US$ 36.7 million from the General Assembly for the period from

1 January to 8 February 1996. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations as of 22 January 1996 was US$ 1,680.3 million.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

37. As detailed above, the peace process in Angola has been proceeding at a disappointingly slow pace. Since August 1995, recurring impasses alternated with brief periods of cooperation between the Government and UNITA, and the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol is still woefully behind schedule. The United Nations has spared no effort to create the environment necessary for the implementation of the Protocol. However, a deep-seated mistrust and a lack of political will to take decisive measures has prevented the parties from honouring their commitments.

38. Recently, both the Government and UNITA agreed on a new timetable to move the peace process forward. This is a welcome development; but major steps need to be taken to dispel the international community's growing impatience and scepticism about the peace process. The time has come to match promises with concrete action. The parties will be doing great disservice to the people of Angola, the future of their country and, indeed, their own credibility if they continue to fail to honour their commitments. The latest assurances about the implementation of the new timetable should be strictly adhered to.

39. The promising steps taken by the Government of Angola in the last few weeks are encouraging. I urge UNITA to respond positively, first of all by a large-scale and fully verifiable movement of its troops to quartering areas. Nor is there any excuse for further delays in the release of all prisoners or in the provision to the United Nations of the information required by the Lusaka Protocol.

40. Bold measures need to be taken by the Government and UNITA to make the peace process irreversible. The talks on military matters must be concluded as a matter of urgency, with workable and fair agreements concerning the incorporation of UNITA troops in FAA and the gradual demobilization of its other forces. The assembly of UNITA soldiers has to be accompanied by an accelerated withdrawal of FAA to the nearest barracks and the completion of the quartering of the rapid reaction police. Joint demining and opening of roads, as well as the free circulation of people throughout the country, are imperative to foster national reconciliation. I also urge President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi to meet as soon as possible in order to promote mutual confidence and resolve outstanding issues.

41. The success of the peace process lies in the hands of the Angolan parties. I am convinced that the international community will continue to respond positively to all constructive initiatives taken by them. The failure of past attempts to bring peace to Angola underscores the need for active international involvement and encouragement. It is in this spirit that I recommend that the mandate of UNAVEM III be extended for a further six months, until 8 August 1996. I will continue to submit comprehensive reports to the Security Council every two months and to keep it informed on a regular basis of all relevant

developments, especially if either of the parties again fails to honour its undertakings.

42. Although the humanitarian situation in the country improved somewhat during 1995, large segments of the population still require massive emergency assistance. With the consolidation of peace, increased assistance and continued strong coordination will be needed for the return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, for the quartering, demobilization and reintegration of soldiers into civilian life, as well as for demining activities. In February, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs will issue a revised version of the current inter-agency appeal, extending the existing humanitarian programme through 1996. I hope that the donor community will respond generously.

43. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to my Special Representative and to the staff of UNAVEM III, as well as to the personnel of the United Nations programmes and agencies and NGOs, for their commendable work under challenging conditions. I also wish to express my appreciation to the three observer States, to their representatives in Angola, and to all other Member States for their unfailing support to the Angolan peace process.

Annex

UNAVEM III - Military and civilian police personnel (as of 25 January 1996)

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Staff officers	Troops	Total
Algeria	8	--	--	--	8
Argentina	--	--	--	--	--
Bangladesh	10	21	21	200	252
Brazil	23 a/	17	38	1 033	1 111
Bulgaria	9	15	--	--	24
Congo	8	--	--	--	8
Egypt	10	15	--	--	25
Fiji	--	10	--	--	10
France	8	--	12	--	20
Guinea-Bissau	20	1	--	--	21
Hungary	10	3	--	--	13
India	19	13	49	1 014	1 095
Italy	--	--	4	--	4
Jordan	20	21	--	--	41
Kenya	10	--	--	--	10
Malaysia	20	6	--	--	26
Mali	10	15	--	--	25
Namibia	--	--	--	199	199
Netherlands	15	8	8	--	31
New Zealand	5	--	8	--	13
Nigeria	20	8	--	--	28
Norway	5	--	--	--	5
Pakistan	5	--	6	--	11
Poland	7	--	--	--	7
Portugal	8	11	20	210	249
Republic of Korea	--	--	--	198	198
Romania	--	--	26	859	885
Russian Federation	8	--	--	159	167
Senegal	10	--	--	--	10
Slovakia	5	--	--	--	5
Sweden	21	9	--	--	30
Ukraine	5	--	--	--	5

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Staff officers	Troops	Total
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	--	--	2	--	2
United Republic of Tanzania	--	3	--	--	3
Uruguay	10	12	38	800	860
Zambia	10	15	12	295	332
Zimbabwe	23	22	35	796	876
Total	342	225	279	5 763	6 609

a/ Including three medical personnel.

Map No. 3881 Rev. 9 UNITED NATIONS
January 1996

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section